

MDMA (Ecstasy)

Street terms for MDMA/Ecstasy: XTC, go, X, Adam, hug drug¹

What does Ecstasy look like?

- Ecstasy is distributed in tablet form. Individual tablets are often imprinted with graphic designs or commercial logos, and typically contain 100 mg of MDMA.

How is Ecstasy used?

- Ecstasy is usually ingested in tablet form, but can also be crushed and snorted, injected, or used in suppository form.

Who uses Ecstasy?

- In 2000, more than 6.4 million people age 12 and older reported that they have used Ecstasy at least once in their lives.²
- Ecstasy is popular among middle-class adolescents and young adults.
- Ecstasy is sold primarily at legitimate nightclubs and bars, at underground nightclubs sometimes called "acid houses," or at all-night parties known as "raves."

How does Ecstasy get to the United States?

- The vast majority of Ecstasy consumed domestically is produced in Europe.
- A limited number of Ecstasy laboratories operate in the United States.
- Law enforcement seized 17 clandestine Ecstasy laboratories in the United States in 2001 compared to 7 seized in 2000.³

How much does Ecstasy cost?

- It costs as little as 25 to 50 cents to manufacture an Ecstasy tablet in Europe, but the street value of that same Ecstasy tablet can be as high as \$40, with a tablet typically selling for between \$20 and \$30.⁴

What are some of the consequences of using Ecstasy?

- In addition to chemical stimulation, the drug reportedly suppresses the need to eat, drink, or sleep.⁵
- When taken at raves, where all-night dancing usually occurs, the drug often leads to severe dehydration and heat stroke in the user since it has the effect of "short-circuiting" the body's temperature signals to the brain.⁶
- An Ecstasy overdose is characterized by a rapid heartbeat, high blood pressure, faintness, muscle cramping, panic attacks, and, in more severe cases, loss of consciousness or seizures. One of the side effects of the drug is jaw muscle tension and teeth grinding. As a consequence, Ecstasy users will often suck on pacifiers to help relieve the tension.⁷

- Ecstasy may cause hyperthermia, muscle breakdown, seizures, stroke, kidney and cardiovascular system failure, possible permanent damage to sections of brain critical to thought and memory, and death.⁸

1 Office of National Drug Control Policy, Street Terms: Drugs and the Drug Trade.

2 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Summary of Findings from the 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, September 2001.

3 Drug Enforcement Administration, Drug Trafficking in the United States, September 2001.

4 Ibid.

5 Drug Enforcement Administration, Club Drugs: An Update, September 2001.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 National Institute on Drug Abuse, Infobox: MDMA (Ecstasy).